

REMARKS

The non-final Office Action was issued on pending claims 1-5. Claims 2, 4 and 5 stand allowed and claims 1 and 3 stand rejected. In this Response, claim 1 has been cancelled without prejudice, claims 2-4 have been amended and claims 6-10 have been added. Thus, claims 2-10 are pending in the application.

Applicants invite the Examiner to call Applicants' Representative to discuss any issues with this application.

Drawings

In Office Action paragraph 4, the drawings were objected to as omitting a legend such as "Prior Art" in Figs. 5, 6 and 7. In response, Applicants request the three sheets of drawings for Figs. 5, 6 and 7 be replaced with the enclosed substitute sheets of drawings for Figs. 5, 6 and 7. The enclosed substitute sheets of drawings include a legend "Prior Art" for Figs. 5, 6 and 7. No other changes have been made to the drawings.

Thus, Applicants submit that the objections to the drawings have been overcome.

Allowable Subject Matter

In Office Action paragraph 7, claims 2, 4 and 5 were noted as being allowable over the prior art. Applicants thank the Examiner for the notice of allowable claims.

Claims 2 and 4 have been amended to clarify the claims. The amendments to the claims are not being made for substantial reasons related to patentability and do not surrender any subject matter. Applicants submit that claims 2, 4 and 5 remain allowable.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

In Office Action paragraph 5, claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. In response, claim 3 has been amended to only depend from claim 2 to clarify the claim according to U.S. practice. Applicants submit that no

subject matter has been surrendered and the claim amendment is not being made for substantial reasons related to patentability.

Thus, Applicants submit that the §112, second paragraph, rejection has been overcome.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

In Office Action paragraph 6, claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Kikuchi et al. (article titled "Splicing of Polarization Maintaining Optical Fibers"). Applicants respectfully disagree.

However, claim 1 has been cancelled without prejudice to quickly place the application in condition for allowance.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the § 102(a) rejection of claim 1 has been overcome.

New Claims

New claims 6-10 have been added. Applicants submit that claims 6-10 are also allowable.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the patent application is in condition for allowance and request a Notice of Allowance be issued.

Respectfully submitted,

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